



**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES**  
860 NORTH BUSH STREET • UKIAH • CALIFORNIA • 95482  
120 WEST FIR STREET • FT. BRAGG • CALIFORNIA • 95437

STEVE DUNNICLIFF, DIRECTOR  
PHONE: 707-234-6650  
FAX: 707-463-5709  
Ft. Bragg Phone: 707-964-5379  
Ft. Bragg Fax: 707-961-2427  
pbs@co.mendocino.ca.us  
www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning

---

---

## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2016

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: RUSSELL FORD, CARTOGRAPHER PLANNER

RE: ORDINANCE UPDATING MENDOCINO COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 18.16 REGARDING THE MASTER GRID AND PROPERTY NUMBERING SYSTEM

**BACKGROUND:** The Mendocino County Department of Planning & Building Services ("Department") is responsible for creating and maintaining the Master Grid and Property Numbering system used to assign physical or 'situs' numbers to parcels in the unincorporated areas of the County. The primary purpose of this responsibility is to coordinate the application of emergency services when needed, as well as to maintain an organized file system within the Department based on property addresses. In addition, the Department is also tasked with processing road name petitions filed by property owners, or filing petitions on the County's behalf when the need arises.

Authority for this responsibility comes from Chapter 18.16 of the Mendocino County Building Code, created by ordinance number 772, adopted in 1971. Sections of Chapter 18.16 were further modified by subsequent ordinance nos. 854 (1971), No. 887 (1972), and No. 3376 (1982).

The Department is proposing amendments to Chapter 18.16 to provide additional clarity regarding the property addressing process and making cleanup changes.

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES:** The proposed changes aim to provide clarification and definition to existing processes, as well as update or eliminate outdated or unnecessary sections. The major changes are as follows:

- ♦ Add language that clarifies the location of the east/west and north/south address base lines.
- ♦ Amend language that allows the Department discretion when addressing 'vacant' (unimproved) parcels. Assigning an address point to an existing or proposed structure significantly increases the accuracy of the system by indicating the correct access to the structure. However, current language says the Department *will* issue addresses to owners upon request when most situations do not require a vacant parcel to carry a property address
- ♦ Amend language designating the system administrator as the Address Coordinator instead of the Building Inspector to reflect current responsibilities.
- ♦ Add language clarifying the process used to determine the address range for a given road, and how numbers are assigned within that range
- ♦ Add language that limits the characters used for situs numbers to whole numbers only, with limited exception, to reflect unofficial but historic Department policy

- ♦ Amend language requiring roads to serve four 'dwellings and/or business establishments' rather than four parcels for road name petitions.
- ♦ Remove language referencing the urgency of the original ordinance
- ♦ Remove language designating the Address Coordinator as the inspector of posted addresses
- ♦ Add a section regarding posted road signs.
- ♦ Amending the penalty section to provide that a violation is an infraction, instead of a misdemeanor, and may also be declared a public nuisance, redressed by civil action, or enforced through any other applicable state or local law.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** The process for naming a private road can be done two ways: The first is with a petition signed by 75% of the affected property owners and submitted to the Department. The petition will be checked for suitability, relevant fees collected and then forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for approval. The second method is a proposal filed by the Department directly, generally to relieve density in issued numbers or to clarify a potentially confusing road layout. The Department may also propose a road name change based on input from the local fire department or associated emergency services agencies. Notifications are sent to the affected owners requesting feedback, and a petition is subsequently sent to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Owners may offer feedback at any step in the process, which will be forwarded to the Board along with the proposal. Once a new private road name is approved, a change of address for all affected structures is usually required.

The assignment and correction of addresses is done by the Department on an 'as needed' basis. Property owners and associated agencies are notified in writing if their addresses are changed

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Department recommends adoption of the proposed changes to Chapter 18.16 of the Mendocino County Code. These changes will substantially help streamline addressing by answering questions about the previously undefined process, as well as clarifying the authority of the Department to update and maintain the addressing system.

**Attachments:**

- A. Draft Ordinance
- B. Code Update- Clean Version
- C. Code Update- Redline